

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 222478

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 222478

NODIS

CHEROKEE FOR AMBASSADOR BYROAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PK, US

SUBJECT: NUCLEAR REPROCESSING - A-7 SALES: CALL BY
PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR

1. THE PAKISTAN AMBASSADOR ACCOMPANIED BY DCM RIZA AND
COUNSELOR USMAN CALLED ON ACTING SECRETARY ROBINSON AND
ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON SEPTEMBER 7 TO GIVE PRELIMINARY
REACTION TO SECRETARY'S PROPOSALS MADE IN LAHORE LAST MONTH.
AMBASSADOR STRESSED THAT GOP UNDERSTOOD THE USG'S PROBLEM
REFLECTED BOTH IN THE SYMINGTON AMENDMENT AND IN THE GENERAL
CONCERN ABOUT THE NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION. IT WAS IMPORTANT
ALSO THAT THE USG UNDERSTOOD THE GOP'S CONCERN.

2. AMBASSADOR STATED THAT IT WAS UNFORTUNATE THESE CONCERNS
HAD NOT BEEN CONVEYED TO THE GOP EARLIER. IF THE GOP HAD
BEEN APPROACHED PRIOR TO SIGNATURE OF AGREEMENT WITH FRANCE,
PERHAPS SOMETHING COULD HAVE BEEN DONE. ONCE THE AGREEMENT
HAD BEEN SIGNED, HOWEVER, THE GOP WAS LOCKED IN NOT ONLY
WITH FRANCE, BUT WITH PAKISTAN AND WITH THIRD WORLD PUBLIC

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 222478

OPINION. GOP FEELING ON THIS ISSUE WAS SO STRONG THAT THE

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS HAD RECOMMENDED TO THE PRIME MINISTER THAT HE NOT EVEN DISCUSS THE NUCLEAR REPROCESSING PLANT WITH THE SECRETARY. THE PRIME MINISTER HOWEVER HAD PLANT WITH THE SECRETARY. THE PRIME MINISTER HOWEVER HAD DECIDED THAT HE WISHED TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF AN

ACCOMMODATION WITH THE USG.

3. THE GOP DOES NOT BELIEVE THE A-7 SHOULD BE LINKED WITH THE REPROCESSING QUESTION. THE A-7 IS REQUIRED FOR LEGITIMATE DEFENSIVE PURPOSES IN VIEW OF THE GOP'S RELATIONS WITH AFGHANISTAN AND INDIA. TO LINK THE A-7 SALE WITH THE REPROCESSING PLANT WOULD BE THE SAME THING AS SAYING THAT THE REPROCESSING PLANT WAS INTENDED FOR PURPOSES OF SECURITY, I.E., PAKISTAN TRYING TO MAKE A BOMB. SINCE THIS WAS NOT THE CASE, THE TWO ISSUES COULD NOT BE LINKED.

4. WITH RESPECT TO THE SYMINGTON AMENDMENT A GOOD CASE COULD BE MADE THAT THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS LEGISLATION ARE BEING FULFILLED, I.E., PAKISTAN FACILITIES ARE AND WILL BE SUBJECT TO IAEA SAFEGUARDS. HOWEVER, DESPITE SAFEGUARDS THERE IS STILL A 7-10 PERCENT CHANCE OF DIVERSION AND THE GOP WAS PREPARED TO SATISFY USG CONCERN ABOUT THIS POSSIBILITY.

5. IN ORDER FOR PAKISTAN TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE U.S. ON THIS PROBLEM ON AN EQUAL BASIS AND NOT TO APPEAR TO BE GIVING IN TO PRESSURE, THE A-7 QUESTION MUST BE DELINKED. ONCE THIS HAS BEEN DONE IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR THE GOP TO EXPLORE THE ENTIRE GAMUT OF PROPOSALS TO SATISFY U.S. CONCERNS ON DIVERSION WHILE NOT YIELDING ON THE PRINCIPLE OF GOING AHEAD WITH THE REPROCESSING PLANT PURCHASE.

6. THE ACTING SECRETARY EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THIS STATEMENT OF GOP VIEWS. HE NOTED THAT THE SYMINGTON AMENDMENT, WHILE UNCLEARLY DRAFTED, REFLECTED AN INTENT WHICH WAS CLEAR. ADMINISTRATION POLICY WAS TO WORK AGAINST NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION. THE PRESIDENT WOULD BE MAKING A STATEMENT ON THIS SUBJECT IN THE NEAR FUTURE AND WE WILL BE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 222478

EMBARKING ON A NEW POLICY ON THE CONTROL OF NUCLEAR MATERIALS, INCLUDING REPROCESSING PLANTS. THE ISSUE THEREFORE IS NOT THE SYMINGTON AMENDMENT BUT MORE GENERAL.

7. WITH RESPECT TO DELINKING THE A-7 FROM NUCLEAR REPROCESSING, NO ONE IN THE USG THOUGHT THAT REPROCESSING IS VIEWED BY THE GOP AS AN ALTERNATIVE ROUTE TO ENSURING SECURITY. IN VIEW OF CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST, HOWEVER,

IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO SAY WHETHER THE TWO ISSUES CAN BE DELINKED. WE ARE PREPARED TO SIT DOWN AND DISCUSS THE DIVERSION PROBLEM, BUT IT IS UNCERTAIN WHETHER THERE WILL BE A WAY TO SATISFY THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS IN THIS WAY. THE EXPERTS BASICALLY QUESTION THE ECONOMIC VALIDITY OF A REPROCESSING PLANT AND VIEW SUCH PLANS WITH SUSPICION.

8. AMBASSADOR NOTED PAKISTAN'S ENERGY NEEDS AND STATED THAT NUCLEAR INSTALLATIONS WILL BE BOMING ON LINE IN SUCH A WAY THAT WOULD JUSTIFY THE REPROCESSING PLANT. HE NOTED THAT A DECISION NOT TO GO AHEAD WITH THE REPROCESSING PLANT WOULD BE FUNDAMENTAL, I.E., COULD NOT BE TURNED AROUND. ON THE OTHER HAND, SUPPLY OF WEAPONS, TERMS OF CREDIT, ETC., ARE NOT FUNDAMENTAL AND COULD BE MODIFIED LATER, I.E., THERE WAS NO GUARANTEE THAT THE USG WOULD BE A RELIABLE AND CONTINUING SUPPLIER OF WEAPONS EVEN IF PAKISTAN ABANDONED THE REPROCESSING PLANT.

9. ACTING SECRETARY NOTED THAT WE ARE NOT ASKING PAKISTAN TO DISAVOW BUILDING A REPROCESSING PLANT FOR ALL TIME. WE ARE ASKING PAKISTAN NOT TO GO AHEAD WITH THIS DECISION AT THIS TIME. MEETING CLOSED WITH THE AMBASSADOR ASKING THAT A-7 REQUEST BE TREATED ON ITS OWN MERITS WITH SUBSEQUENT TALKS TO BE HELD ON THE REPROCESSING ISSUE. KISSINGER

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